THE NATION

CIA: Latest JFK plot claim 'ludicrous'

By George Haj
USA TODAY

CIA officials Monday rejected as "ludicrous" a Dallas man's claims that his father was one of three CIA operatives who assassinated President John F. Kennedy.

During an earlier news conference, 29-year-old Ricky White said his late father, Roscoe White, joined the Dallas Police Department so he could carry out the assassination.

White said Lee Harvey Oswald and police officer J.D. Tippit, who Oswald killed after the 1963 assassination, were "patsies." Oswald was a part of the conspiracy, while Tippit was uninvolved, White said.

He said much of his information came from his father's diary, but he could not produce the book. He suggested FBI agents had taken it.

The FBI said that, in 1988, it received the same information as White divulged Monday but "determined that this information is not credible."

The CIA denied the claims.

"These allegations — that this was done on CIA orders, that this guy worked for us and that the CIA had any role in the assassination of President Kennedy — are ludicrous," spokesman Mark Mansfield said.

Official investigations of the assassination concluded Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone.

White's news conference was at the JFK Assassination Center in Dallas, a group that has pursued the idea of a conspiracy and cover-up.

"We hope the (Texas) attorney general will reopen the case," said center director Larry Howard. "The federal government has done two investigations, but they haven't done it right yet."

By Eric Gay, AP

NEWS CONFERENCE: Ricky White stands next to a photo of JFK's motorcade taken minutes before the president was shot.

Dozens of reporters covered the news conference, and Howard said later he "had 300 to 400 calls today. We've been on several news shows and *Inside Edition* is filming, too. The response has been incredible."

White's theory has credence in the eyes of one man who investigated the assassination.

Former New Orleans prosecutor Jim Garrison still says the CIA was behind Kennedy's death. He tried New Orleans businessman Clay Shaw in 1969, but a jury rejected Garrison's claim that Shaw was part of a CIA plot.

"There is the possibility that this is valid because there are so many points where this kind of statement ... usually veers off into unbelievability," Garrison said. "This statement continued to ring true."

But Woody Specht, an FBI agent who spent nine years assigned to the assassination case, said: "There's been so many claims like this in the last 27 years. You have to use good judgment here, especially from somebody who was, what, 2 years old at the time?"